

INSIDE PEACE CORPS

Chief Executive Officer's Message

Since the new year, words from Amanda Gorman's "New Day Lyric" have been echoing in my mind. In it she says, "Tethered by this year of yearning, we are learning, that though we weren't ready for this, we have been readied by it." I cannot help but repeat these words as I reflect on the Peace Corps' journey to return Volunteers to service overseas. There have been bumps in the road, but we have learned a great deal along the way. The challenges have prepared us to meet the moment by infusing new innovation into our time-tested approaches, holding our most valued partners – the communities where our Volunteers are invited to serve – at the center of all we do, and aligning our work more explicitly to our values.

The return of Volunteers will be intentional, balancing the health and safety considerations of host communities and Volunteers with the urgent need to contribute to immense development challenges. That being said, we anticipate we will send off our first Volunteers in March! To kick-off our 61st year and to learn how the community and Volunteer experience will be different as we return to service, please join in our Peace Corps Week celebrations. I am so grateful for your enduring support of the Peace Corps.

Join Us!

Join us in celebrating Peace Corps Week from February 27 to March 5! Peace Corps Week commemorates President John F. Kennedy's establishment of the Peace Corps on March 1, 1961. This year's theme, "Meet the Moment," recognizes the many ways that Peace Corps network members have met the challenges of the past year, setting the stage for the Peace Corps' ambitious agenda—one focused on innovation, intentional change, and accountability. For more information and to register for virtual events, visit the [Peace Corps Week 2022](#) website.

Developments

The Return of Volunteers to Service Overseas. The Peace Corps has developed a comprehensive process to return Volunteers to service, incorporating a robust set of readiness factors. You can learn more about the agency's re-entry process [here](#). *To date, the agency has issued invitations for Volunteers to serve at 24 Peace Corps posts!* The Peace Corps anticipates that the first groups of Volunteers will begin their service in March in Zambia and the Dominican Republic. These groups will include evacuated Volunteers, evacuated Trainees, and new two-year Volunteers. If conditions permit, additional groups will follow in April, May, and June as the agency steadily builds back its Volunteer corps. *Tune in to [The Peace Corps Reimagined: A Keynote Address and Forum](#) on March 3 to learn which countries have received preliminary approval and are issuing invitations!*

COVID-19 Response and Recovery. COVID-19 has impacted every country around the world, and has disproportionately impacted developing countries. In fact, it is estimated that COVID-19 has set back ten to twenty-five years of development gains. In January 2022, Peace Corps staff finalized a COVID-19-specific Logical Project Framework (LPF) that aligns with the [U.S. COVID-19 Global Response and Recovery Framework](#). Currently, all Peace Corps posts are supporting COVID-19 program efforts, and all Volunteers will be expected to contribute to these efforts as they return to service overseas. Complementing this work, the agency is also participating in an initiative for Global Vaccine Access ([Global VAX](#)), a new interagency effort aiming to accelerate U.S. vaccine delivery assistance around the world.

New Opportunities to Support Host Country Partners Virtually. For more than a year, returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) have been donating their time and services to host country partner projects through virtual engagements. RPCVs interested in reconnecting with the Peace Corps and its partners and who can provide five to 15 hours of time and expertise per week should monitor the Virtual Service Pilot (VSP) opportunities open exclusively to RPCVs. RPCVs may engage in their former country of service or another country. Check out current virtual opportunities [here](#).

A Roadmap for Broadening the Peace Corps' Approach to Sexual Violence. Sexual violence is a pervasive global health issue and the Peace Corps is stepping up to support a shift from a public safety to a public health approach through a comprehensive prevention strategy for Volunteers and community members. Guided by expert recommendations made by the Sexual Assault Advisory Council (SAAC), an independent advisory council established by Congress, and public feedback collected during a two-week period in December, the Peace Corps has been developing a roadmap which will detail how it will further strengthen the Sexual Assault Risk Reduction and Response (SARRR) program and related programming. Once available, a press release and the roadmap will be posted [here](#).

Historically Black Colleges and Universities 2022 Agency Plan. For nearly 40 years, the Peace Corps has supported the White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity through Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), formerly known as the White House Initiative on HBCUs. The Peace Corps' 2022 HBCU Agency Plan extends deeper stakeholder support to the 13 HBCUs hosting Peace Corps Prep or Paul D. Coverdell Fellows programs; expands HBCU marketing and recruitment for Peace Corps employment, internships, and Volunteer programs; and reinforces the Peace Corps' commitment to assessing internal processes and policies that impede participation of underrepresented communities in programs and other opportunities. The HBCU 2022 Agency Plan was submitted to Congress in February 2022.

The Federal Government Distance Learning Association's Five Star Award. Through the Peace Corps' LearningSpace Course Developer Certificate program, over 800 Peace Corps staff members have been trained to support the agency's digital learning efforts to support Volunteers' return to the field and to develop learning modules for staff. The training program resulted in the creation of over 200 online courses. The Peace Corps recently received the Five Star Award from the Federal Government Distance Learning Association in recognition of this program. A Peace Corps staff member, Peter Bergh, was also honored with the Pioneer Award for his leadership around the development of these distance learning tools.



The Peace Corps in Photos

In the Works

Draft Strategic Plan for the Next Four Years – In a world transformed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Peace Corps' mission to promote world peace and friendship is more relevant than ever. [The Draft Fiscal Year 2022-2026 \(FY22-26\) Strategic Plan](#) positions the agency to respond to critical global challenges by bringing people together, fostering equity and inclusion, and meeting communities' most pressing needs. The Peace Corps used a participatory process to engage stakeholders in developing the Draft Strategic Plan. This engagement included soliciting input from Peace Corps leadership and staff both at headquarters and overseas, through over 30 meetings and 70 listening sessions. The Peace Corps also considered input from external stakeholders such as the National Peace Corps Association and members of Congress, and posted the Draft Plan on its website for public comment. The resulting Draft FY22-26 Strategic Plan is designed to meet the evolving priorities of host country partners, promote diversity and intercultural understanding, and deliver consistently on commitments to key stakeholders. This Plan's strategic objectives, performance goals, and targets will help the Peace Corps continue its 60-year track record of impactful volunteering for development as Volunteers return overseas with renewed energy and clarity of mission. The Draft Plan will become final once it is published with the FY23 President's Budget. Attend [The Peace Corps Reimagined: A Keynote Address and Forum](#) event on March 3 to learn more about the agency's Draft FY22-26 Strategic Plan.

New Framework for Goals Two and Three – After more than a year of collaboration among staff and RPCVs across the agency, the Peace Corps will soon launch a standard approach to advancing Goal 2 and Goal 3. The new approach articulates the contributions of Goal 2 and Goal 3 to achieving the Peace Corps' mission of world peace and friendship. The framework is based on evidence-informed practices, builds on years of experience, and provides the flexibility to capture the many ways through which Volunteers meet these goals. With this new framework, the Peace Corps will be able to track and aggregate the activities Volunteers implement with host community members, counterparts, and others that help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served and a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans. When Volunteers undertake Goal 2 and Goal 3 activities, more people and groups around the world have the opportunity to navigate intercultural differences and establish lasting relationships. All Peace Corps staff will be introduced to this framework, and Volunteers will be trained on this approach as they return to service. Click [here](#) for more information on the Peace Corps' mission and three goals.

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We are challenged to achieve a world perspective. Anyone who feels that we can live in isolation today, anyone who feels that we can live without being concerned about other individuals and other nations is sleeping through a revolution.

– Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Stories

In recognition of Black History Month, we highlight two RPCVs' stories:



The Driving Force Behind Adopt a Black Peace Corps Volunteer

"Black Volunteers have curiosity about themselves and their communities, but they also have the Black experience in an international context. They just bring a special sauce to the Peace Corps."



Empowering Youth in Guinea with Peace Corps Response

"When I was young and still living in Burkina Faso, I was impressed by projects Peace Corps Volunteers had organized in the villages, and I never forgot."

[Read more stories](#) →

Events

The Peace Corps and its partners host a variety of events. Check out recent and upcoming virtual events involving the Peace Corps:

December 9 – Peace Corps Thought Leader Series: It's Not Just an Environmental Thing (recording)

February 28 – Language Lessons from Post: Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Region (registration)

March 3 – The Peace Corps Reimagined: A Keynote Address and Forum (registration)

March 9 – The Peace Corps Presents: Women's History Month (registration)

March 16 – The Peace Corps' First Virtual Career Fair (registration)

March 17 – Is Peace Corps for Me? A Conversation with HBCU Communities (registration)

[View all events](#) →



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